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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE

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SUBJECT: CHARGE DISCUSSES ANTI-TIP EFFORTS WITH MFA

1. (U) Summary: Charge and Poloff met January 6 with MFA Deputy U/S Ertay and MFA Deputy DG Topcuoglu to discuss GOT efforts to combat trafficking in persons (TIP) and the upcoming State Department TIP Report. Topcuoglu said neither the GOT nor its NGO partner have been able to secure funding to implement a comprehensive anti-TIP protocol signed in September. However, the GOT has made a number of recent anti-TIP initiatives, including: a panel for law enforcement officials, journalists, and NGOs; a decree providing free medical care for TIP victims; and briefings for journalists. Charge said the Department is interested in detailed data on TIP-related arrests, convictions, and sentences. End Summary.

MFA: Funds Needed to Combat TIP

2. (U) Charge said the GOT made good progress over the past year in its anti-TIP efforts. He noted that the GOT in September signed a protocol with the Human Resources Development Foundation (HRDF), an Istanbul-based NGO, under which the two parties agreed to a series of measures including: shelters for TIP victims; public awareness efforts; training programs; and voluntary repatriation. What progress has been made in implementing the protocol? Topcuoglu said both the GOT and HRDF are seeking funding for the efforts outlined in the protocol; the GOT has approached the Finance Ministry, and HRDF has applied to outside sources, including the Soros and Gates foundations and the EU. So far, no funding has been obtained. Without funding, it will not be possible to implement the protocol. Topcuoglu asked whether the USG could provide support, or whether we might suggest an NGO to help HRDF with funding and organization. Charge said the Embassy has been looking into the possibility of USG funding for a shelter. Ertay emphasized that the GOT had selected HRDF as its NGO partner for anti-TIP initiatives, following a recommendation by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and said HRDF would need to be part of any NGO solution. As we discussed potential partners, Ertay said no faith-based NGO would be acceptable as a partner to the GOT.

Other Efforts Continue

3. (U) Topcuoglu said the GOT has continued its anti-TIP efforts on a number of fronts. On December 5, for example, the GOT enacted a decree providing free medical care in State hospitals to TIP victims. On December 18, the Directorate General on the Status and Problems of Women held its second annual panel in Ankara on human trafficking. The event was attended by law enforcement officials from around the country, journalists, and NGO representatives. The GOT has also contacted the governments of the main source countries for women trafficked to Turkey -- Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, and Ukraine -- seeking closer cooperation in combating the problem. However, there has been no response. Turkey works closely with Ukraine and Romania on a number of bilateral issues, but there is no coordinated approach on TIP. The GOT would like to sign a TIP protocol with all six neighboring countries. Ertay said the GOT has been successful in raising public awareness of TIP, which was virtually unheard of until recently in Turkey. Thanks to numerous official briefings, there is now regular press coverage on human trafficking.

Statistics Needed

4. (U) The Charge told Ertay and Topcuoglu that the Department would be particularly interested this year in detailed statistics on TIP-related arrests, prosecutions,

convictions, and sentences. Topcuoglu and Ertay said MFA will collect data from the Interior and Justice ministries and pass it to the Embassy and State Department. The Charge thanked Topcuoglu and Ertay for their efforts, and said the Embassy will remain in close contact with MFA on TIP issues.
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